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A NEW EDITION OF THE MISHNA¹

To the Mishna's importance for the understanding of early Judaism, and of the beginnings of Christianity is due the re-editing by fifteen prominent Old Testament scholars of that primitive Jewish literature. The Mishna and the New Testament are the classical sources of Judaism and Christianity respectively. What the New Testament is for Christians, the Mishna with the Old Testament is for the Jews. The Talmud is nothing else than an exposition of the Mishna. To understand the content and genius of Judaism a knowledge of the Mishna is indispensable. Like the New Testament, the Mishna is divided into a number of individual writings. In the six books or sixty-three *Traktaten* of the Mishna there are found exact specifications on every imaginable detail of Jewish life. All the demands are based on the authority of Moses and his successors, the later scribes. These facts indicate the chief and most important reasons for the issuance of a complete edition of the Mishna.

The purpose of the editors is to issue in this great series a complete printed text, printed in metrical form on the left-hand page, with a German translation on the right, occupying about one-half of the page; also on the lower half of each page full textual and critical notes. Each of the editors will strive to present on the basis of the sources an improved text, and also as far as possible to work over the biblical, talmudical, archaeological, literary, and religious evidence found in the text. This work will make accessible to scholars the best apparatus yet printed on the Mishna.

The first two *Traktaten* to be issued are by the editors-in-chief. Holtzmann's *Berakot* has a plain introduction which discusses the origin of the confession and daily prayer, beginning with the three texts of Deuteronomy: (1) Deut. 6:4-9; (2) Deut. 11:13-21; and (3) Num. 15:37-41. Philo's part in the work and the Palestinian recensions receive due credit for establishing the confession and daily prayer as they exist among orthodox Jews. Each confession and prayer is taken in its order, fully translated and interpreted on the basis of the best light accessible to the editor.

¹ *Die Mischna: I Seder-Zeraim; I. Traktat. Berakot (Gebete).* Text, Uebersetzung und Erklärung. Von O. Holtzmann. Giessen: Töpelmann, 1912. viii+106 pages. M. 5.

Die Mischna: II Seder-Moëd; 3. Traktat. Pesachim (Easter). Text, Uebersetzung und Erklärung. Von Georg Beer. Giessen: Töpelmann, 1912. xxiv+212 pages. M. 10.

Beer's contribution on *Pesachim* is a notable volume. More than one-half of the space is given to a history of the Passover festival. The fact that such Jewish teachers as Eliezer, Gamaliel, the Hillel followers, Chananya, Jehuda, Akibha, the Shammaites, and Simon made contributions to the subject required the author to go somewhat into the details of the theme.

The place the Passover held in the Jewish year made its discussion of prime significance. Beer begins with the Exodus of Israel from Egypt and follows step by step through each document down to the establishment of the Lord's Supper. He lays under tribute to his discussion the latest researches of Old Testament, Semitic, and Jewish scholars. The Traktat *Pesachim*, with all the new light from other sources surveyed by the author, makes a new contribution to that interesting and far-reaching festival. Jewish life at the period of the establishment of Christianity was a live and energetic force in the world, and one worth our most careful study on the basis of the Mishna.

IRA MAURICE PRICE

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

THE ETHICAL TEACHING OF JESUS¹

Students of the New Testament and students of the history and principles of ethics greatly need a straight interpretation of Jesus' ethical teaching. For Jesus' teaching was certainly a notable contribution in the first century to the conception and to the practice of right living, and primitive Christian ethics constitutes one of the finest chapters in the history of ethical progress. This fact is somewhat obscured at the present time because the ethical teaching of the New Testament is not differentiated from the theology, and the disregard of New Testament theology by ethical scholars includes a disregard of New Testament ethics. It is therefore important that a differentiation should be made between the theology and the ethics of the New Testament, and that its ethics should be presented in a full historical interpretation.

We have as yet no book which accomplishes this. Perhaps no book has been published whose author actually attempted this scientific task. Certainly the late Professor Clarke, whose last book, entitled *The Ideal of Jesus*, appeared but a few months before his death at the

¹ *The Ideal of Jesus*. By WILLIAM NEWTON CLARKE. New York: Scribner, 1912. 329 pages. \$1.50.